

Claims

1. A method for creating and accessing a menu for audio content stored in a storage means (S), the content consisting of audio tracks, and the menu containing representations of said audio tracks, **characterized in**
- classifying (CL) the audio tracks into groups, or clusters (C1,...,C3) wherein said classification is performed according to characteristic parameters of said audio tracks;
 - selecting (R) automatically an audio track being a representative for the cluster, wherein said selection is performed according to characteristic parameters of said audio track and of the other audio tracks of said cluster;
 - generating (X) as said representation a reproducible audio extract from said representative audio track; and
 - associating said audio extract to a menu list (T).
2. Method according to claim 1, wherein said characteristic parameters used for classification of audio content comprise one or more audio descriptors, the audio descriptors being either physical features, or perceptual features, or psychological or social features of the audio content.
3. Method according to any of claims 1-2, wherein an audio track can be classified into more than one cluster (C1,...,C3).
4. Method according to any of claims 1-3, wherein the audio tracks within a cluster (C1,...,C3) have variable order, so that the user listens to a randomly selected track when

having selected a cluster (C1,...,C3), with said track belonging to said cluster.

- 5 5. Method according to any of claims 1-4, wherein a user can modify the result of automatic classification of audio tracks.
- 10 6. Method according to any of claims 1-5, wherein a user can modify the classification rules for automatic classification of audio tracks.
- 15 7. Method according to any of claims 1-6, wherein the actual audio data are clustered within said storage means (S) according to said menu.
8. Method according to any of claims 1-7, wherein the audio extract is a sample from the audio track, or an audio sequence being synthesized from the actual audio track.
- 20 9. Method according to any of claims 1-8, wherein audio extracts are created additionally for audio tracks not being representatives of clusters.
- 25 10. Method according to any of claims 1-9, wherein the length of audio extracts is not predetermined.
11. Method according to any of claims 1-10, wherein one of said clusters has no representative track.
- 30 12. Method according to any of claims 1-11, wherein said menu is hierarchical, such that a cluster may contain one or more subclusters.

13. Method according to any of claims 1-12, wherein the classification rules are modified automatically if a defined precondition is detected, and a reclassification may be performed.

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14. Method according to claim 13, wherein said precondition comprises that the difference between the number of tracks in a cluster and the number of tracks in another cluster reaches a maximum limit value.

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15. Method according to claim 13, wherein said precondition comprises that all stored tracks were classified into one cluster, and the total number of tracks reaches a maximum limit value.

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16. An apparatus for creating or accessing a menu for audio content stored on a storage means (S), the content consisting of audio tracks, and the menu containing representations of audio tracks, **characterized by**

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- means for automatically classifying (CL) the audio tracks into groups, or clusters (C1,...,C3) wherein said classification is performed according to characteristic parameters of said audio tracks;

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- means for automatically selecting (R) an audio track being a representative for the cluster, wherein said selection is performed according to characteristic parameters of said audio track and of the other audio tracks of said cluster;

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- means for generating (X) a reproducible audio extract from said representative audio track; and

- means for associating said audio extract to a menu list (T).

17. Apparatus according to claim 16, further characterized by

- means for selecting and reproducing a first audio representation from a first cluster;
- means for a first user input (M,SU,SD), the input controlling whether the cluster associated with the currently selected audio thumbnail is selected or not; and
- means for a second user input (M,SU,SD), the input controlling whether another cluster is selected or not.

18. Apparatus according to any of claims 16 or 17, further characterized in that an audio track of the selected cluster is read from said storage means (S) for playback.